

Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs

Minutes of the Meeting of ECESA Plus Principals

4 November 2010

3:00 – 5:00pm

New York

Conclusions and Decisions

- **Principals decided to grant UNISDR observer status with ECESA**
- **Principals were of the general view that the Rio+20 Conference should uphold the principles and commitments contained in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) which remains relevant to sustainable development. The Conference should in particular, address the reasons for the gaps in implementation.**
- **Principals stated that the concept of a “green economy” should take into consideration national systems and policies that have proved successful in supporting sustainable development, and examine national experiences based on in-depth analysis from the ground up in developing countries. “Green economy” should not be translated as “green protectionism” or aid conditionality.**
- **Principals identified several key sectors as critical towards progress on sustainable development. These include access to energy services, sustainable management of water resources, agriculture and food security, wealth creation, sustainable urbanization and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Similarly, cross-cutting themes of gender equality, employment, population dynamics, and financing were highlighted. They hoped that the Conference would help in shaping a shared global vision for addressing these challenges.**
- **Principals called for further reflection on the issue of institutional arrangements for sustainable development. They emphasized that better coordination among the existing arrangements should be promoted. There should be a system-wide effort to build synergies.**
- **Principals enumerated a number of initiatives and concrete actions that each agency/entity would launch for the Conference, ranging from analytical papers and studies to joint projects and programmes.**
- **Principals shared the view that the UN System should develop an integrated response to the challenges of sustainable development which would be critical for the success of the Conference. They agreed to continue intensive engagement on substantive issues.**

Summary of Discussions

I. General Remarks

The Convenor, Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs welcomed the Principals. He began by drawing the Principals’ attention to the request made by the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) for Observer Status with ECESA. Having no objections to the request, the Committee approved the request and welcomed Ms. Margareta Wahlstrom, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for UNISDR. Mr. Sha

pointed out that there were no agreed criteria for Observer Status applications, (UNISDR's being the first of such requests). He recommended that a certain degree of flexibility be allowed for such requests to be treated on a case by case basis. However, Mr. Sha suggested that a general rule should be that the work of the organization should be directly relevant to the work of ECESA.

Mr. Sha reiterated the important role that ECESA Plus plays in bringing together the capacities of the UN system to support the UNCSD preparatory process. He outlined a number of contributions that had been made by UN entities. He expressed his gratitude to Ms. Helen Clark, the Head of UNDP, and Mr. Achim Steiner, Head of UNEP, who in their capacity as Chairs of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and Environmental Management Group (EMG), have agreed to complement ECESA efforts by mobilizing these mechanisms in support of the Rio+20 preparatory process. Mr. Sha also thanked ECLAC and UNEP for having seconded two staff members to the UNCSD dedicated Secretariat. Likewise, he thanked UNESCO for assigning a staff member to work with the Conference Secretariat. In addition, Mr. Sha thanked UNCTAD for having hosted in early October an Expert Group Meeting on green economy and trade, as well as to ESCAP for assisting the Republic of Korea in organizing a meeting on green growth.

Mr. Sha then called Principals' attention to the on-going analytical work undertaken by the UNCSD Secretariat in preparing the SG Report and Synthesis Report needed for the proceedings of the first inter-sessional meeting in January 2011 and 2nd PrepCom meeting in early March 2011. Mr. Sha thanked all those who have already provided technical inputs and contributions in response to the Secretariat's request. Mr. Sha encouraged UN entities to continue providing more detailed information as requested by the Secretariat through the questionnaire because similar reports would be needed for the forthcoming PrepComs and inter-sessional meetings.

Mr. Sha drew Principals' attention to the recommendation made by the first Preparatory Committee meeting (PrepCom I) held on 17-19 May 2010 called on UN entities to make available the outcomes of the meetings of their governing bodies and executive boards towards Rio+20 preparations. He pointed out that, in response to such a request sent out to 18 Agencies, only 6 have provided the relevant material, while 3 provided the calendar of their Governing Council meetings. He welcomed future submissions which, he stated, should be relevant to the objective and themes of the Conference and will be posted on the dedicated Conference website (www.uncsd2012.org).

Moreover, PrepCom I requested the Secretariat, *inter-alia*, to prepare the *Secretary-General's Report* on progress to date and remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits in the area of sustainable development, as well as a *Synthesis Report* on best practices and lessons learned on the objective and themes of the Conference. In order to make the Rio+20 Conference a success, Mr. Sha urged UN system entities to contribute to the UNCSD preparatory process through, (and not limited to) for example (i) contributing to the SG Reports; (ii) sharing experiences of lessons learned by filling in the questionnaire; (iii) seconding staff members to aid the preparation process; (iv) supporting national and regional preparations; (v) considering collaborating around specific initiatives (UN-led, UN and Member States) that could be launched at the time of the Conference.

Mr. Sha enumerated three pertinent issues that were being raised by different stakeholders, especially the Member States:

1. The first concerned how the Secretary-General's Panel on Global Sustainability will support the Rio+20 preparatory process as Member States see this process purely as an "intergovernmental process". The Secretary-General has established a High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, whose mandate includes contributions to the UNCSD preparatory process. The report of the Panel will be released by the end of 2011.

2. The second calls for more clarity as to how to position the "green economy" concept within the context of sustainable development. The 'Issues Note' highlights some reservations held by developing countries about the green economy concept which they believe could restrict their policy space by imposing aid conditionalities, justifying trade protection, or impeding the development

process. They are also concerned about whether or not the green economy concept will be defined within the principles and parameters agreed in Rio and Johannesburg. The SG Report for PrepCom I provided a summary of approaches developed within the UN system, including by ESCAP, UNEP, ILO, DESA, and others.

3. The third issue is how to frame the debate on institutional framework for sustainable development governance. At the global level, attention has focused on the environmental pillar, especially on the International Environmental Governance (IEG) process, and there is interest in supplementing it with inputs on broader sustainable development questions and integration of the three pillars.

Mr. Sha also raised the issue of inadequate funding for preparatory activities especially for providing technical assistance to country level preparations. In addition to his request to the donor community, the DSG held a meeting with the donors encouraging them to contribute to the CSD Trust Fund. While some donors had responded with the intention of providing Associate Experts, the challenge of insufficient funds remains serious. Indeed, the existing level of Trust Fund can barely support the activities of CSD-19. He therefore urged Principals to discuss ways of overcoming this challenge.

He then invited principals' perspectives on the following issues:

1. Vision about the expected outcomes of the conference.
2. Views and perspectives on progress and gaps in implementation and on emerging issues.
3. How should the concept of "green economy" be framed as part of sustainable development?
4. How should the discussion on institutional framework for sustainable development governance be framed?
5. What concrete initiatives the UN system or their agency could launch at the conference?
6. How shall UN system organize itself to provide support required for national and regional preparations?

UNEP while describing its vision of the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference recommended that the outcome should not take the form of an Agenda 21. UNEP suggested that UN system entities should consider why implementation has not taken place much faster than at present. UNEP invited Principals to consider ways in which the international community can help speed up the process of implementation.

UNEP also called on Principals to consider how the UN system can learn from past lessons. UNEP envisioned significant reform for sustainable governance emerging from the Rio+20 Conference. UNEP expressed interest in working with ECESA Plus members and with the whole UN family over the next year and a half particularly on the issue of the green economy through many different platforms and processes such as outreach activities aimed at civil society, regional consultations, and national-level initiatives.

UNEP indicated that in March 2012 it will publish its 'Global Environmental Outlook' report which has been brought forward by six months so as to serve as a useful contribution and "feeder document" to the Rio+20 preparatory process. The report will be an environmental assessment of the state of the world and priorities for action. UNEP invited Principals to indicate expressions of interest in a major UNEP-led event focusing on the concept of environmental justice and in a number of events which are expected to involve a number of Supreme Court judges and that would mature around the time of the Rio+20 Conference.

CBD outlined its vision of the outcome of Rio+20 as one where sustainable development was anchored at the highest political level of Heads of States. CBD also believed that it would be inappropriate to reopen Agenda 21 or the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). Instead, CBD proposed that what was needed was for Heads of States to recommit themselves, through a short political declaration, to put sustainable development at the top of their agendas. CBD felt that the time had come to pursue implementation rather than engage in more meetings as there is currently an implementation gap. CBD opined that too much time had been spent on developing the concept of sustainable development and therefore did not feel it appropriate to adopt a new concept such as the green economy.

CBD informed that it has adopted an Access and Benefit Sharing Protocol which encompassed all concepts related to sustainable development. CBD emphasized that there is a need to bring the UN system together to ensure the implementation of this protocol and to have it operationalized before the next COP in India and the UNCSD in Rio. CBD felt that Rio+20 could be a tremendous opportunity for such operationalization.

CBD felt that the concept of International Environmental Governance (IEG) and the agenda of reform that it proposes should not be an “alibi” for avoiding short, down-to-earth mechanisms and mergers to enhance and work within the current architecture. CBD remarked that the current architecture of the UN is not as bad as some want to put it and that it can work better if UN system bodies work together on the subject that unites them. In terms of concrete initiatives, **CBD** spoke of the joint activities between the three Rio conventions which were being undertaken in Nagoya. CBD asserted that the international community should stop “simply paying lip service” to the synergies among the three Rio conventions and instead take action to promote them.

CBD also emphasized the need for the UN to promote joint activities. It informed Principals of the launch of an ecosystem pavilion--a two-week conference focused on the synergies among the three Rio Conventions: biodiversity, desertification and climate change. The pavilion will go from Cancun to South Korea, to Johannesburg and then to Rio +20. CBD hoped that by then, it would be able to submit a joint work program/joint activities at the Rio+20 Conference between the three Rio conventions. Another initiative called “1000 days for the planet” was launched in Nagoya. It is an expedition directed by a famous explorer/film director, Mr. Jean Lemire, who will sail on a boat from Montreal on the 22nd of May, 2011, on the international day of biodiversity. He will sail for 2 years and direct ten episodes. He will stop in each city to present the results of each episode. The boat will reach Rio in May 2012, where at a reception for Heads of State, the results of the episodes will be presented.

IFAD declared that its vision of the expected outcome of the Conference is to have rural poverty eradication and agricultural development positioned as cornerstones of the sustainable development agenda including discussions on the green economy. IFAD would like to see the Rio+20 Conference highlight the benefits that low carbon power generation in rural areas can realise for economies as a whole and for poor rural populations. It hoped the Rio+20 Conference would advocate for a massive scaling-up of efforts to support developing countries in this area.

On the “green economy” **IFAD** recommended that if the concept of a ‘green economy’ is to be a useful term and one that helps people have a common understanding, it must be given a specific and unambiguous meaning. For IFAD, any such redefinition would have to start by framing economic growth in terms of reduced carbon emissions both in relative and absolute terms. IFAD highlighted that, for the organization, a key aspect of discussions about the green economy will be on how to provide the necessary incentives to small holder farmers to adopt sustainable intensification practices such as conservation agriculture that reduces carbon emissions. The second aspect would be making a non-farm rural economy more sustainable. For example, decentralised renewable energy generation like hydropower, bio diesel, solar and wind driven-power sources, can represent a new and important driver of rural economic growth and rural poverty reduction.

On the issue of elements for a proposed institutional framework for sustainable development, **IFAD** cautioned about the idea of establishing new institutional arrangements. IFAD stressed that such new arrangements would have a cost and could represent “a burden, even an imposition”, particularly for developing countries as they risk being marginalised within nationally-owned processes. It suggested that the approach in terms of an IFSD should instead be to integrate the understanding of the sustainable development concept within existing institutions at all levels to influence already-established nationally-driven policy processes including those for Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and sector-level policies.

IFAD urged Principals not to forget the importance of organizations owned by poor people and the key roles they can and do play in promoting sustainable development at the local level. To illustrate this, IFAD gave the example of what it considered “perhaps one of the major institutional successes for sustainable development since the first Rio Conference” namely the widespread adoption of community-based natural resource management approaches and emergence of organizations of rural people coming together to manage water resources.

IFAD proposed that a starting point for UN agencies to support national and regional preparations must involve the development of a narrative that clearly indicates the potential concrete benefits for national and regional bodies to be derived from the Rio+20 Conference. IFAD stated that it will be working with its member governments but stressed that a key area for IFAD would involve working with rural peoples’ organizations, and particularly producers’ organizations, to ensure their issues are brought to the fore at Rio+20.

UNITAR shared with Principals the contributions it would be making in the fields of learning and skills development to support the Rio+20 preparatory process. It expressed its intention to widely disseminate the body of knowledge built through its work on environmental governance, specifically the UNITAR/Yale University initiative on environmental governance. This initiative brings together an international network of practitioners and academics to foster innovative thinking on institution and stakeholder involvement in environmental decision making. **UNITAR**’s Executive Director was said to have repeatedly been approached by different stakeholders in the Rio+20 preparatory process in particular from networks in Brazil with requests to render support in facilitating a multi-stakeholder event in Brazil in 2011.

UNITAR informed Principals that the institution was beginning to explore how the preparatory process itself could be supported by providing training to negotiators in connection with, for example, regional consultations and for diplomats preparing here in NY. UNITAR has initiated a dialogue with DESA, concerning closer collaboration and ensuring synergies within the preparatory process on this front. **UNITAR** pointed out that its focus on capacity development allows it to multiply any outcomes of larger preparatory events through appropriate means of training and knowledge system innovation, including its training platforms such as the UNCC: LEARN on climate change.

UNITAR stated that it will deliver capacity-building support in the context of intergovernmental processes and national implementation strategies in the area of sustainable development. UNITAR highlighted some of its relevant assets such as UNITAR’s experience on facilitating knowledge sharing and capacity building on environmental issues, UNITAR’s flexibility to bridge between government and non-government stakeholders and the UN System, and UNITAR’s new regional office in Brazil opened in October this year. In light of these, UNITAR intends to actively contribute to the preparatory process in other ways.

UNDP felt that the Rio+20 Conference offers an opportunity to “marry” the international system’s efforts in poverty reduction/MDG achievement with the effort to tackle environmental degradation and climate change. In this regard, UNDP announced that its response to the Synthesis Report questionnaire will be about linking the climate change, MDG and sustainable development agendas.

UNDP stressed that despite some progress made so far, much work still remains to be done on integrating the three pillars of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) at the

country and international level. For instance, at the country level there is a need to strengthen capacities across government to address sustainable development issues at a strategic level as well as to mainstream environmental and poverty concerns into economic and sectoral decision making. UNDP argued that the same challenge exists at the international level. **UNDP** stressed two main points: 1. bringing the bottom-up approach to the Conference by highlighting the national experience and 2. informing outcomes based on the national experience. UNDP was ready to support national preparations, stakeholders meetings as well as bringing forward the experiences at the country level for the Conference, by undertaking in-depth analysis and gathering evidence at the country level.

UNDP also stressed the need to help the developing world overcome some its fears of a top down approach in terms of the definitions and the decisions that will be taken at the Conference. For example, the concept of a “green economy” currently has no clear definition. This concept per UNDP is not another paradigm rather it is part of the sustainable development effort that has to be done at the country level where national economies will have to be transformed accordingly. The best way to do so would be to work with those countries on the definitions and the guidance principles that will be defined at the Conference.

UNDP mentioned that its Human Development Report for 2011 will be about sustainable development and in this way will contribute to UNCSD-related discussions and analysis.

UNFPA was also of the view that integrating the three pillars of sustainable development was very important, and posited that achieving this will be the main challenge for the UN System at Rio+20. It stressed that focusing on people rather than simply economic growth or production and consumption will help ensure the relevance of poverty reduction in the green economy. UNFPA also raised the issue of a lack of understanding and action on the critical role of population dynamics. UNFPA outlined three aspects of population dynamics which it believed are central components of the foundation for sustainable development and of the transition to the green economy; they are: 1. size and growth of the population including its structure by age and sex; 2. the spatial distribution of the population particularly with regard to the pace and the extent of urbanization; and 3. the mobility of the population including both internal and international migration.

UNFPA stated that the inclusion of these dynamics that would help to focus the sustainable development agenda on planning for the composition, distribution and movement of the population in the long term. This in turn, will shape areas vital to the green economy such as food security, employment and occupational structure, health and social protection, agriculture and environmental vulnerability. **UNFPA** also informed participants of its work to integrate population dynamics and particularly the area of urbanization into the debate on the green economy. At Rio+20, UNFPA will launch an initiative to apply these concepts by gathering data from the 2010 round of censuses together with other population data and apply them to the crucial issues of sustainable development. For UNFPA, national-level capacity building for data analysis and their application in policy making processes is going to be at the centre of UNFPA’s planned initiative.

On the matter of technical contributions, **UNFPA** will be working on a concept paper on population dynamics including a comparison of least developed and developing countries. The paper will examine the links between population size and growth, urbanization, internal migration and development in different social, economic and environmental contexts paying particular attention to the links between population dynamics and models of economic growth. **UNFPA** mentioned that it is working on a framework paper about the critical role of population dynamics in assessing vulnerability, exposure and adaptive capacity against climate change.

UNFPA also briefed participants on its work on a compendium of case studies of urbanization in different regions and at different points of the urban transition so as to generate a knowledge base applicable for countries developing policies for addressing fast paced urbanization. It reiterated its support in working with all of the UN System on the UNCSD.

OHRLLS reminded participants of the forthcoming fourth UN Conference on LDCs in 2011 in Istanbul. It pointed out that the countries covered by OHRLLS are those that are the most impacted in all three areas of sustainable development. OHRLLS outlined its vision for the Rio+20 Conference as one where the principles agreed upon in Rio and Johannesburg would be upheld. OHRLLS however emphasized that its vision also includes paying particular attention to the LDCs and African countries. OHRLLS called for the UNCSD to address poverty eradication by finding the best ways of ensuring sustainable management of land and of water resources and increased productivity in agriculture. Also crucial were issues related to energy generation, finding new sources of energy without harming the environment and making technology accessible and affordable to developing countries.

For **UN-Habitat**, one of the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference should be the recognition of the role of urbanization in sustainable development and in particular, the high-rate of energy consumption and carbon emissions that occur in cities. To this end, UN-Habitat mentioned that one of the ideas that they are planning to propose is centred on reducing the impact of mobility, namely, finding mass transportation systems which would favour less consumption of energy. UN-Habitat stated that promoting development requires guaranteeing efficient mobility in emerging cities.

UN-Habitat also suggested that the UN System propose urban planning for sustainable development within a “green economy”. In particular, UN-Habitat recommended that national urbanization policies promote “intermediate states” i.e. areas between the two extremes of rural areas and big cities. UN-Habitat stressed the need to improve the capabilities of local authorities to grant them enough resources to deal with poverty and environment issues, as well as the need to tackle the broad challenges resulting from urbanization.

ECLAC, speaking on behalf of the **Regional Commissions**, strongly emphasized the need for the UN System to deliver an integrated approach to sustainable development and demonstrate that the UN is capable of providing the necessary “global public goods” and is ready to promote the new economic paradigms under collective principles. ECLAC also stressed that the focus should be on the multilateral environment. Many developing countries are concerned that the green economy could become a unilateral approach for protectionism. It suggested that the UN system deliberate carefully about the “green economy” concept and renew its commitments as encompassed in the December 1989 Resolution 44/228. ECLAC called on the UN System to fashion a green economy that responds to growth with equity, to the challenges of urbanization, and employment generation. ECLAC also underscored the need for ECESA plus to present an integrated approach when preparing for Rio+20. Furthermore, it strongly recommended undertaking a bottom-up approach that incorporated country and regional approaches.

ECLAC also informed participants of the secondment to the UNCSD Secretariat of a “green economy” expert. It reiterated the Regional Commissions’ willingness to provide support on all fronts, as for example, through the regional meetings due to begin in December with consultations to be held in all of their regions. ECLAC pointed out that its consultations will include consultations with the Brazil government. They also mentioned the role of the regional coordinating mechanisms which report to ECOSOC.

ESCAP informed participants of the ministerial conference it convened in Astana last month which discussed the environment and development. This conference concluded that green growth was one of the approaches that could foster sustainable development. ESCAP announced that it had several on-going initiatives including the Astana Green Bridge initiative, the Pacific Green Growth initiative, and the Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth.

UNIDO emphasized that energy and related issues should feature at the Rio+20 Conference, which should in turn call for the strengthening of UN Energy. There needed to be an “energy revolution”. **UNIDO** also urged the UN System to make it clear to Member States that “green economy is here to stay”. The UN System should collectively give Member States concrete definitions of “green economy” and show Member States how this could be a potentially transformative opportunity at all levels. Furthermore, **UNIDO** highlighted the issues of destructive production and consumption

patterns. For instance, land-degrading production patterns employed by rich countries exploit natural resources in poor countries, highlighting a need for sustainable production patterns.

UNIDO will be organizing an energy conference in June under the auspices of all 20 agencies in UN Energy which could be an opportunity to focus discussions on energy-related matters. UNIDO will also publish the “*Industrial Energy Efficiency*” Report and a “*Greening the Industry*” Report.

WFP pointed to the fact that deep poverty and malnutrition are still widespread and risk being further compounded with the changing climate. WFP believed the challenge for the UN System is to develop more inclusive and sustainable rural development and food production models that recognize and integrate the need for the inclusion of the poor and highly vulnerable people.

In this context, WFP proposed the establishment of safety nets which could also be used to protect people from disasters like floods and drought. WFP explained that food and cash transfers are also provided to communities in exchange for work while extension agents ensure that the quality of their work is good. WFP suggested that such initiatives be scaled up further as they have both a poverty focus and a green/sustainability focus, as well as address the realities of the people living in these areas. **WFP** also gave an example of a concrete initiative involving the production and distribution of environmentally-friendly and locally produced stoves. It stressed that climate change offers an opportunity to better link development with disaster risk reduction and humanitarian efforts. WFP suggested that UN System entities could collaborate on such an initiative.

On the concept of the “green economy”, **WTO** insisted that the UN System has to convey the right message to ensure that it will not be interpreted as “green protectionism”. Moreover, WTO urged Member States to work on avoiding misunderstandings as well as to underline that green economy is open economy and not a north-south issue. They reminded participants that the message at Rio 1992 explicitly linked sustainable development with open trade.

On concrete initiatives, **WTO** informed participants of its plan to prepare a background paper on the trade related aspects of green economy in which it will set out the different relevant issues and highlight how the WTO experience deals with them. WTO also envisaged working with DESA in the drafting, in terms of legal language, etc, of the declaration to emerge from Rio+20. WTO informed participants that it had established a taskforce to work on Rio+20-related issues and through it will be hosting seminars in Geneva with WTO members on green economy.

In the context of institutional arrangements for sustainable development, **WTO** suggested that its experience as the overarching trade body could perhaps prove useful, for example, by considering WTO’s monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, etc.

UNCCD reminded participants of the major challenges that will emerge in the next decade: increased poverty, food insecurity, and a more unstable world due to more regional conflicts fuelled by demand for finite resources and compounded by the political crisis surrounding climate change. For **UNCCD**, the major gap that exists is the low profile given to the land agenda especially the dry land issues. It called for more mainstreaming of sustainable development at all levels especially at the national and local levels. **UNCCD**’s vision for Rio+20 is that it would result in a paradigm shift towards an inclusive, effective and efficient pro-poor framework that would drive the payment for ecosystem services while at the same time address the issues of food security, poverty alleviation, access to energy, access to market and vulnerability.

UNWTO expressed its intention to organise a roundtable as a parallel event during the Rio+20 Conference.

UNESCO seconded the idea of building on Agenda 21, and called on the UN System to operationalize the principles contained therein. It stressed the need to emphasise why sustainable development today is even more relevant than it was 20 years ago, and this had to be reflected in the outcome document. **UNESCO** also stressed that gender empowerment and equality will be a solution to sustainable development challenges.

UNESCO furthermore, reiterated the need for the UN System to strive for policy coherence across the various areas. For example, UNESCO suggested that UN efforts be aimed at reinforcing international cooperation in several areas through joint programming at the country level, in particular. UNESCO encouraged participants to learn from the lessons of the ‘Delivering as One’ process and to avoid the proclivity to work alone. UNESCO also lent its voice to the bottom-up approach and called for a sharper focus on the education for sustainable development, the role and impact of culture and cultural diversity on sustainable development, and the ethics of sustainable development, such as ethics of water use, etc. In advocating for the sustainable management of water, **UNESCO** has submitted proposals on water and indicated that there will be more proposals for oceans and biospheres.

UN Women envisioned concrete and innovative outcomes from the Conference that would lead to funding and implementation of activities. It called for a scaling-up of programs and strategies related to sustainable development which UN Women, for its part, is currently still developing. It expressed its interest in exploring further means to collaborate on joint programming for launch at Rio+20. It also expressed its support of WFP’s initiative on solar stoves as an example of a concrete initiative “that needs to be rolled out in the twenty-first century as it would greatly improve the environment, biodiversity, safety and health of women.”

The World Bank believed that informing and energizing the younger generation is important as well as renewing commitments and political will to address emerging issues. It was important to synthesize the different strands between biodiversity, ecosystem management, and the MDGs, so that the general public can have a clearer understanding of the meaning of sustainable development and what is at stake if not implemented. **The World Bank** also supported the idea of learning from past lessons, particularly on how the most vulnerable groups have been affected. It called for scaling up of best practices and for the reinforcement of financial commitments.

The World Bank announced that it was contributing to the green economy paper prepared by UNEP, and also undertaking a number of green economy studies at the regional level. The World Bank stressed that, beyond the definition, it is important to address what the “green economy” actually looked i.e., what would green cities look like? What is a green urban energy strategy? What does a green growth and poverty reduction strategy look like? etc. **The World Bank** recently launched the ‘Global Partnership for Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services Valuation and Wealth Accounting’ in Nagoya, Japan. It added that it will undertake a lot of stock taking and analytical work and expected to launch a number of partnerships with many of the UN agencies. **The World Bank** also reminded participants that a lot of actions at the regional, national and local levels were being undertaken, and recommended that the UN System take them into account.

UNWTO asserted that it is a small and new member of the UN System but it dealt with the second largest sector in the world economy. It has taken initiatives to promote sustainable and responsible tourism aimed at poverty eradication. It has established a “sustainable tourism road map” in which UNWTO will collaborate with other organizations of the UN System to develop a joint paper on the subject. UNWTO also intend to contribute a chapter to the UNEP report on environment and development.

Mr. Sha added that the Secretariat was preparing cluster plans that would facilitate organization of preparatory activities in a coordinated and systematic manner. He stated that these cluster plans, which are provisional, will soon be circulated to ECESA Plus colleagues. They will also be continuously revised to reflect decisions from the PrepComs and lessons learned during the preparatory process.

Mr. Sha stressed that UN System entities align their initiatives with the objectives and themes of the Conference as set out in GA resolution 64/236 and should also reflect the respective strengths of each

entity. He also stressed that initiatives should be coordinated with the dedicated Secretariat so as to avoid a duplication of efforts.

Mr. Sha thanked participants and encouraged them to continue with such frank dialogues in the run up to the forthcoming intersessional and PrepCom meetings. He reiterated that Rio+20 is an intergovernmental process in which Member States themselves will make decisions on the preparation and organization of the Conference. In this light, he underlined the duty of the Secretariat to provide coordinated, efficient and effective support to Member States.